

The Passaic County Historical Society (PCHS) Library

By Michelle Novak

This article is the first in a series about local repositories and some underutilized resources that may be of interest to Bergen County genealogists. If you have a repository or library you would like to see included in this series, please send your suggestions to Michelle Novak, gsbcarchivist@icloud.com



The PCHS Library and Archive, located in the lower level of historic Lambert Castle in Paterson, NJ, contains a rich collection of materials related to Passaic and Bergen Counties, its towns, and its families. The Library contains more than 5,000 items — including approximately 2,800 publications on local history, industry and labor movements; city directories, maps and atlases; newspaper clipping files; published genealogies; and compiled family and individual data sheets. The Library also contains an extensive microfilm collection of local newspapers and original maps, documents, and manuscripts (restricted access). www.lambertcastle.org

WHAT ARE THE MUST-SEE RESOURCES FOR GENEALOGISTS?

- **The Quackenbush Collection** — From the 1940s to 1960s, Jack D. Quackenbush, compiled data sheets for more than 70,000 individuals in early New Jersey. While the collection primarily focuses on Dutch and Huguenot settlers, it traces their descendants, and early New Jersey immigrants of other nationalities, through to the early twentieth century. Quackenbush used many sources for his data sheets including church and cemetery records, censuses, newspapers, and oral histories. (Of special note, the index to this collection was not included in the donation to the Library and PCHS volunteers painstakingly reverse-indexed the collection to the sources.)
- **The Mattie Bowman Collection** — This manuscript collection consists of copies of church records, original correspondence, research notebooks, newspaper clippings, and genealogical worksheets related to 375 families.
- **The PCHS Card File Collection** — Newspaper clippings, transcripts, and bible records on hundreds of individuals and families from 1926 to 1969.
- **City Directories** — Primarily for Paterson, but also contains directories for other Passaic, Essex, and Bergen municipalities.
- **PCHS Original Publications** — The Library and bookstore contain many titles written by PCHS members, including private and public cemetery transcriptions, newspaper indexes, and a history of houses of worship of Passaic and Bergen Counties. www.lambertcastle.org/bookstore.html

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MORE UNDERUSED RESOURCES?

- **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps** — Most people doing family research focus on names and dates, but these maps can add much more to the story.
- **The Passaic County Childrens Aid (CA) & Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (SPCC)** — A recently indexed gem for researchers.
- **Yearbooks** — A great resource when looking for more recent relatives and to understand more about the times they lived in.

For more information on the collection, visit:

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~njpchsgc/lib/catalog.htm

WHAT ARE THE HOURS, FEES, AND OTHER INFORMATION?

- The PCHS Library is open Friday 1 pm – 4 pm, and the second and fourth Saturday of the month, 1 pm – 4 pm. (Note that the Library recently reopened after a long closure for inventory and Museum construction. Call ahead to

confirm opening hours. The Library may be closed in observation of holidays, inclement weather, or during special events.)

- The Library is free to PCHS members, and \$5 for non-members. Admission includes access to the Lambert Castle Museum.
- The Passaic County Genealogy Club meets the second Saturday of the month at 10 am, and researchers are welcome to attend the meeting and enjoy the lecture and coffee before visiting the Library at 1 pm. Check the meeting calendar: www.lambertcastle.org/calendar.html
- Food, beverages, overcoats, and large bags are not permitted in the Library and on-site lockers are available to secure belongings. Notebook, pencils, and laptop computers are permitted.
- Photocopies and the microfilm printer are 25-cents per page.
- Handicapped parking is located at the front entrance of the Museum on the circular driveway. Follow the path around to the *back* of the building and buzz the intercom for stair-free entry. An elevator serves all levels of the building.

WHAT ARE SOME “PRO TIPS”?

- Make an appointment with a Research Specialist before your visit. Special appointments may be available depending on staff availability.
- Narrow down your research scope, or have a general idea of what you hope to discover, and bring all of the information you know about the family or person you are looking for with you. The collection may not have *exactly* what you are looking for, but there may be surprises waiting.
- Bring a sweater! The Library, located in the basement of the Castle, is very chilly even on the hottest days.

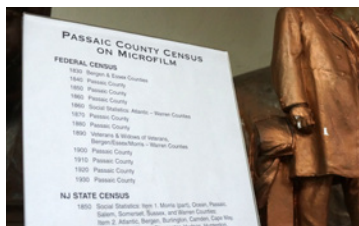
HOW CAN I CONTACT A RESEARCH SPECIALIST?

- **Patrick Byrnes** is the Research Specialist at the PCHS. He can assist with using the collection and can answer basic questions before making your trip. Patrick Byrnes, *Research Specialist*
(973) 247-0085 x204
library@lambertcastle.org / www.lambertcastle.org

- The PCHS also offers look-ups and research via phone or email for a fee (hourly research) or donation (simple lookup).

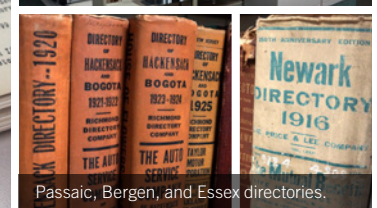
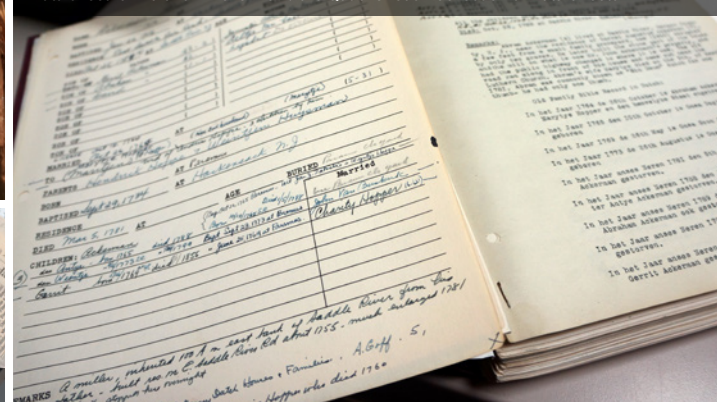
Research Fees: www.lambertcastle.org/res_fees.html

Research Form: www.lambertcastle.org/Research_Request_Form.pdf



The Mattie Bowman Collection

Data sheet for Abraham Ackerman / the Quackenbush Collection of Data Sheets



Passaic, Bergen, and Essex directories.